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Letter dated 8 May 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government and further to my previous letters dated 28 December 2000 and 10 April 2001 (A/55/720-S/2000/1253 and A/55/895-S/2001/345), regarding the illegal abduction from the area of the British Sovereign Bases in Cyprus, on 13 December 2000, of a Cypriot national, Panicos Tziakourmas, by agents of the illegal regime, I would like to refer to and protest against the so-called "ruling" by the illegal court, in the Turkish-occupied area of Cyprus on 26 April 2001, sentencing Mr. Tziakourmas to six months in prison.

The Government of the Republic of Cyprus considers this so-called "ruling" to be non-existent, illegal and contrary to every notion of legality.

As I have informed you in my previous letters, Mr. Tziakourmas was abducted and held hostage in an obvious attempt of the illegal regime to blackmail the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, in order to gain the release of a subsequently convicted Turkish Cypriot felon, who was arrested a few days earlier by the competent police authorities while trying to sell two kilograms of heroin to undercover police agents in the Government-controlled areas.

It is obvious that the intention of the subordinate local administration of Turkey in occupied Cyprus was to exchange Mr. Tziakourmas with the Turkish Cypriot felon, as made evident by the threat to abduct Greek Cypriots if he was not released, made by an "official" of the illegal regime to UNFICYP on 3 December 2000.

The case of Mr. Tziakourmas underscores the illegality of the regime established in the Turkish-occupied areas of Cyprus, maintained by the use of force, where even innocence, guilt or the general sense of justice are subjugated to political considerations. Mr. Tziakourmas' innocence was never in any doubt. A statement by the British Foreign Office issued on 26 April expressed dismay for the guilty verdict which appears to take no account of the evidence that Mr. Tziakourmas was illegally taken by force from the Eastern Sovereign Base Area

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and stated that the "decision flies in the face of the evidence gathered by the Sovereign Base Area Police".

By abducting and illegally sentencing a Cypriot national whose only crime was his misfortune to be a Greek Cypriot waiting to collect Turkish Cypriots who worked for him in the Government-controlled area, the occupying Power and its subordinate local administration have demonstrated once more their well-known policies in Cyprus, which are none other than the forced separation of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, in order to promote Turkey's partitionist aims on the island.

Although the Cypriot people rejoiced at the subsequent liberation of Mr. Tziakourmas, there is a general feeling of sadness at the loss of his mother, who, following a stroke, passed away a few hours before his release. The callousness of the illegal regime was once more demonstrated by the unnecessary postponement of his release, under various pretexts, until after this sad event.

This incident exposes once more that the sad situation which exists on the island is due to the continuing Turkish occupation, with all the evil that that entails. It makes abundantly clear that the international community has a special responsibility to redouble its efforts to put an end to this anachronism, continued for 27 years, with all its adverse consequences for all Cypriots, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots alike.

My Government would like, in conclusion, to express its gratitude to all those who have worked for the liberation of Mr. Tziakourmas, in particular the United Kingdom, UNFICYP, the European Parliament and all those who have voiced their opposition to this criminal act and have lent their support for the release of Mr. Tziakourmas.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 64 and 114, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Sotirios **Zackheos**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative